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General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

87th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 22 December 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Reports of the Second Committee

The President: This morning the General Assembly will consider the reports of the Second Committee on agenda items 97 to 105 and 12. I request the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, Mr. Hussam Edin A'Ala of the Syrian Arab Republic, to introduce the reports of the Second Committee in one intervention.

Mr. A'Ala (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, the reports of the Second Committee.

The Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee on item 97, entitled "Macroeconomic policy questions", which is contained in document A/54/585 and addenda 1 to 5. Document A/54/585 contains the introduction to the item.

The report on sub-item (a), "High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development", is contained in document A/54/585/Add.1. Paragraph 8 of that document contains one draft resolution recommended by the Committee for adoption by the Assembly.

Under sub-item (b), entitled "Financing of development, including net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries", the Second Committee, in paragraph 10 of document A/54/585/Add.2, recommends the adoption of one draft resolution. The Committee adopted the draft resolution by recorded vote.

The report on sub-item (c), "Trade and development", is contained in document A/54/585/Add.3. Paragraph 19 of that document contains three draft resolutions, and paragraph 20 contains one draft decision recommended by the Committee for adoption by the Assembly. Draft resolution III was adopted by the Committee by recorded vote.

In paragraph 7 of document A/54/585/Add.4, submitted under sub-item (d), entitled "Science and technology for development", the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution. Document A/54/585/Add.5 contains the report of the Committee on sub-item (e), entitled "External debt crisis and development". In paragraph 7 of that document the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution. The fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution should be corrected by deleting the comma in the fourth line, after the word "countries".

The General Assembly also has before it the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 98, entitled "Sectoral policy questions", which is contained in document A/54/586. Paragraph 17 of that document contains three draft resolutions under sub-item (a), entitled "Industrial development cooperation", and under sub-item (b), entitled "Business and development", which

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the Committee recommends for adoption by the General Assembly.

Under agenda item 99, "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation", the Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee, which is contained in document A/54/587 and addenda 1 to 8. Document A/54/587 contains the introduction to the item and a list of documents before the Committee.

In paragraph 6 of document A/54/587/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution under sub-item (a), entitled "Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade".

Under sub-item (b), entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly, in paragraph 13 of document A/54/587/Add.2, the adoption of three draft resolutions.

In paragraph 8 of document A/54/587/Add.3, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption, under sub-item (c), "Women in development", of one draft resolution and, in paragraph 9, the adoption of one draft decision.

Under sub-item (d), "Human resources development", in paragraph 6 of document A/54/587/Add.4, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution.

In paragraph 8 of document A/54/587/Add.5, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution under sub-item (e), "International migration and development, including the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development to address migration issues".

Document A/54/587/Add.6 contains the report of the Committee on sub-item (f), entitled "Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s". In paragraph 9 of that document the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution and, in paragraph 10, the adoption of one draft decision.

Document A/54/587/Add.7 contains the report of the Committee on sub-item (g), entitled "Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership". In paragraph 7 of that document the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution and, in paragraph 8, the adoption of one draft decision.

Document A/54/587/Add.8 contains the report of the Committee on sub-item (h), entitled "Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development". Paragraph 3 of that document recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft decision.

The General Assembly also has before it the report of the Second Committee on item 100, entitled "Environment and sustainable development", which is contained in documents A/54/588 and Addenda 1-7.

Document A/54/588 contains the introduction to the item and a list of documents before the Committee. Under sub-item (a), entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21", the Committee, in paragraph 9 of document A/54/588/Add.1, recommends the adoption of one draft resolution and in paragraph 10 one draft decision.

Under sub-item (b), entitled "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction", the Committee, in paragraph 10 of document A/54/588/Add.2, recommends the adoption of two draft resolutions.

In paragraph 6 of document A/54/588/Add.3, submitted under sub-item (c), entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under sub-item (d), entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind", the Assembly has before it document A/54/588/Add.4. Paragraph 8 should be corrected by replacing, in the second line, the word "decision" with the word "resolution". The same paragraph contains the recommendation of the Committee to adopt one draft resolution.

In paragraph 7 of document A/54/588/Add.5, submitted under sub-item (e), entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or

Desertification, particularly in Africa", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution.

In paragraph 10 of document A/54/588/Add.6, submitted under sub-item (f), entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions.

In paragraph 21 of document A/54/588/Add.7, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of four draft resolutions, which are not related to a specific sub-item.

Under agenda item 101, entitled "Operational activities for development", the Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee, contained in document A/54/589.

No proposal was submitted or action taken under sub-item (a), "Operational activities for development of the United Nations system". In paragraph 16 of document A/54/589, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions, and in paragraph 17 one draft decision under sub-item (b), "Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries".

The Assembly also has before it the report of the Second Committee under agenda item 102, entitled "Training and research", which is contained in document A/54/590. Paragraph 14 of that document contains two draft resolutions, which are recommended for adoption by the General Assembly.

The Assembly has before it document A/54/591, which contains the report of the Second Committee on agenda item 103, entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian People in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources". In paragraph 11 of that document, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee by a recorded vote.

Under agenda item 104, entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/592. In paragraph 16 of that document, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 105, entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), the Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/593. In paragraph 10 of that document, the Committee recommends to the Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution.

Under agenda item 12, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council", the Assembly has before it the report of the Second Committee, contained in document A/54/594. In paragraph 16 of that document, the Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of four draft decisions.

With this introduction, I would like to place the reports of the Second Committee before the General Assembly for adoption. But before concluding, I should like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Second Committee for their contribution to the work of the Committee. In particular, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Roble Olhaye of Djibouti, and the three Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Giovanni Brauzzi of Italy, Mr. Alexandru Niculescu of Romania and Mr. Daúl Matute of Peru for their efforts in successfully completing the work of the Committee. My thanks also go to the staff members of the Secretariat for their assistance and endeavours. I would like to extend special thanks to Ms. Margaret Kelley and her colleagues for their great efforts and for the support they gave me in preparing the Committee's report.

The President: I call on the representative of Guyana on a point of order.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): It is not my intention to interrupt the flow of discourse on this issue. I would like to raise a point of order in relation to the report just presented by the Rapporteur, whom we thank profoundly for the excellent work he has done in that capacity in the Second Committee.

I just wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to a small correction in document A/54/592. I refer to paragraph 16 of that report, which contains a draft resolution on globalization. In paragraph 10 of that draft resolution, the phrase "needs of the people with efficient" should read as "needs of the people based on efficient". This change reflects the result of the negotiations in the

Second Committee, which has not been correctly reflected in the current text. I just thought I would bring this to the attention of the Assembly.

The President: The Assembly takes note of that correction.

I now give the floor to the representative of Suriname on a point of order.

Mr. Kerpens (Suriname): Let me first thank the Rapporteur for the excellent work that has been done, and take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Assembly to some matters that were previously raised in the Second Committee.

We are a little bit disturbed that although we twice took the floor in the Committee to point out certain agreements that were reached during negotiations and that were supported by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen, the Secretariat's editors have not taken note of our request. I just want to place this on the record because this is the third time that my delegation has intervened on this matter. I hope that with this intervention the matter can be concluded satisfactorily.

I would first like to draw the Assembly's attention to the draft resolution I, contained in paragraph 19 of document A/54/585/Add.3. During delicate negotiations we agreed that in paragraph 13 of that draft resolution, the words "small island developing" should be capitalized, so the phrase reads "Small Island Developing States", and that this phrase should be followed by the acronym SIDS, in parentheses. Also, the phrase "Small Island Developing States" is correctly reflected in paragraph 14 of that resolution, but the acronym (SIDS) is missing.

Furthermore, a correction should be made to the eleventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution contained in paragraph 16 of document A/54/592 so that the words "small island developing" are also capitalized and the phrase "Small Island Developing States" followed by the acronym (SIDS), as was agreed.

I hope that this time the request of my delegation will be honoured. I apologize for taking the floor.

The President: The request shall be honoured. The Secretariat will ensure that the corrections will be reflected in the draft resolutions.

I call on the representative of Guyana on a point of order.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): I regret to take the floor a second time.

I would like to refer the Assembly to the draft resolution contained in paragraph 8 of document A/54/585/Add.1. In paragraph 8 of that draft resolution, the phrase "fifteen representatives of States Members of the United Nations" should read as "fifteen representatives of States Members to the United Nations", to reflect the understanding reached in the negotiations. I bring this to the Assembly's attention so that it may be duly noted and corrected in the official records.

The President: I call on the representative of Mexico, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Escanero (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to endorse the statement made by the representative of Guyana in respect of document A/54/585/Add.1.

The President: I call on the representative of Morocco, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Amaziane (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to refer to document A/54/585/Add.2, particularly with respect to section II on the consideration of draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.72. I had informed the Secretariat at the appropriate time that if my delegation been present during the voting in the Second Committee, it would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.72. I see that despite the assurances given me, that information was not included in paragraph 7 of the report of the Second Committee. I hope that this correction will be made subsequently.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Second Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Committee have been made clear

in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Second Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee. This means that where a recorded vote was taken, we will do the same, unless the Secretariat has been notified otherwise in advance.

I also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote the recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Second Committee.

Agenda item 97

Macroeconomic policy questions

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585)

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/585?

It was so decided.

(a) High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585/Add.1)

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Gallagher (United States of America): As an active participant in the ongoing dialogue on financing for development, the United States is pleased to join the consensus in adopting this draft resolution, which helps to carry the dialogue further to what we hope will be a productive and useful outcome for all concerned.

It is noteworthy that Member States have recognized in this draft resolution that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are key stakeholders in development finance issues. In fact, these institutions and the regional development banks play a pre-eminent role in financing sustainable development. We would therefore encourage their maximum participation in the preparatory process and the final event itself.

We remain concerned about the form and agenda of the final event, however. We believe that the importance of development finance issues merits high-level participation but emphasize that developing countries will be best served if the outcome of the event is not a political document but rather practical guidelines on the effective mobilization, prioritization and utilization of resources in support of national efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. We would therefore strongly advocate a final event form that favours substance over style. Further, the form of the final event should be such that it does not soak up developing country or donor funds that could be put to more directly beneficial uses.

We are pleased that the Preparatory Committee will have the opportunity to clarify the agenda. We consider the full implementation of the 1990s conferences and summits and the agenda for development to be an important goal. However, the inclusion of this topic in the agenda should not be interpreted as conveying any new or expanded funding obligations.

With regard to the agenda, we also wish to emphasize our view that questions such as governance of the IMF, the World Bank or the regional development banks and issues related to the international financial architecture can be addressed only by the relevant international forums such as the Financial Stability Forum or the Group of 20. We believe that the agenda for the United Nations should focus on the ways in which the United Nations can encourage Member States' own development efforts.

We continue to support the constructive dialogue between the United Nations and the relevant international institutions in an effort to achieve development goals.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/196).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 97.

(b) Financing for development, including net transfer of resources between developing and developed countries

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of its report. The draft resolution is entitled "Towards a stable international financial system, responsive to the challenges of development, especially in the developing countries". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

United States of America

The draft resolution was adopted by 155 votes to 1 (resolution 54/197).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bolivia and the Gambia advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

(c) Trade and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 19 of its report and on the draft decision recommended in paragraph 20 of the same document.

The Assembly will turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "International trade and development". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/198).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries". The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/199).

The President: Draft resolution III is entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Germany, Marshall Islands, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uzbekistan

Draft resolution III was adopted by 107 votes to 3, with 46 abstentions (resolution 54/200).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bolivia, the Gambia and Yemen advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Germany had intended to abstain.]

The President: We turn now to the draft decision entitled "Documents relating to trade and development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): As we all know, every two years the General Assembly considers and adopts a draft resolution on specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries. This issue has long been recognized by the General Assembly and the international community. Numbering 30, landlocked developing countries are among the poorest countries and continue to face many different problems and difficulties. The lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by the remoteness from world markets and the resulting prohibitive transit transport costs, impose considerable constraints on the external trade and economic development of this group of countries.

In my capacity of chairman of the group, I would like today to express our sincere appreciation to all Member States, especially our transit neighbours, as well as our development partners, for the spirit of cooperation and flexibility which made possible the adoption by consensus of the resolution just adopted. We very much hope that that adoption by consensus will pave to way to the full implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the fourth Meeting of Governmental Experts from Landlocked and Transit Developing

Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions, held last August.

The fourth Meeting of Governmental Experts was a success. The General Assembly has just welcomed its conclusions and recommendations. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my appreciation to the Government of Japan for its financial support, which enabled the participation of landlocked developing countries in that meeting. I also wish to thank and congratulate Ambassador Satoh of Japan for his able chairmanship. The meeting was especially important, as it considered that it was necessary to convene a ministerial meeting in 2003 as a further effort to address the problems of landlocked and transit developing countries. We, the landlocked developing countries, are truly looking forward to that big event, and the Office of the Special Coordinator for Least Developed, Landlocked and Island Developing Countries should be strengthened in order to enable it to carry out, effectively and efficiently, its mandate in support of the landlocked developing countries. I would like to urge all Member States to support the proposal before the Fifth Committee in this regard.

We are also pleased that the General Assembly has agreed that the fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts in 2001 would consider convening a ministerial meeting in 2003. This is a very encouraging indication that the international community is seriously seized with the issue facing the landlocked developing countries. We urge the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in particular to effectively prepare for the fifth Meeting, in collaboration with other organizations, including the Regional Commission, bearing in mind the proposed ministerial meeting in 2003.

By way of conclusion, the group of landlocked developing countries once again wishes to express its gratitude to the donor community for its support and to UNCTAD for its overall assistance and cooperation aimed at resolving the particular problems and needs faced by the landlocked developing countries. It is our hope that we will continue to receive more support and financial assistance, and on the most concessional terms possible. The development of an efficient and self-reliant transport system, indeed, requires due and priority consideration on the part of the international community.

Mr. Tchoulkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation wishes to speak in explanation of vote on resolution 54/200 on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries.

Recently, we have witnessed with increasing frequency the use by a number of countries of economic means to exert political pressure. We feel that the resolution that has just been adopted should help the international community to combine its efforts and take urgent and effective steps to stop such actions against all States.

In this connection, the Russian delegation is seriously concerned by the steps taken by the United States and the members of the European Union to impose unilateral sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The use of such economic measures, which are not sanctioned by the Security Council, and the imposition of compliance with them on third States — which is incompatible with the United Nations Charter and generally recognized principles of international law — contradict the basic principles of the system of multilateral trade and undermine the processes of settlement. They also seriously destabilize the situation in the Balkan region.

In the light of the events surrounding Yugoslavia, we feel that the resolution has assumed new importance. The conclusions of experts contained in the report of the Secretary-General prepared in compliance with resolution 52/181, reflect the need to oppose the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion, especially the practice of secondary boycotts against third-party States. The report rightly notes that

> "unilateral measures of coercion are increasingly at odds with the evolving principles and rules of international economic and social cooperation that are embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the constituent treaties of multilateral trade and financial institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, and that seek to provide, *inter alia*, mechanisms and procedures for collective policy review and dispute settlement". (*A/54/486, para. 50*)

The Russian delegation, having voted in support of resolution 54/200, stresses its position of principle on the unacceptability of the unilateral use of economic measures aimed at a specific country that harm the economic interests of others.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

(d) Science and technology for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585/Add.4)

The President: We turn now to the draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report (A/54/585/Add.4).

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/201).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

(e) External debt crisis and development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/585/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report (A/54/585/Add.5).

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Enhancing international cooperation towards a durable solution to the external debt problem of developing countries". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/202).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 97?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 98

Sectoral policy questions

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/586)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 17 of its report (A/54/586).

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/203).

The President: We next turn to draft resolution II, entitled "Business and development".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/204).

The President: We next turn to draft resolution III, entitled "Prevention of corrupt practices and illegal transfer of funds".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution III. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 54/205).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 98?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 99

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587)

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/587?

It was so decided.

(a) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/206).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 13 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/207).

The President: We turn next to draft resolution II, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/208).

The President: We turn next to draft resolution III, entitled "Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution III. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/209).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 99.

(c) Women in development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution, entitled "Women in development". The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/210).

The President: We now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Documents relating to women in development".

The Second Committee adopted the draft decision. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

(d) Human resources development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution entitled "Developing human resources for development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/211).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

(e) International migration and development, including the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development to address migration issues

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "International migration and development". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/212).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

(f) Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.6)

The President: I should like to inform members that the consideration of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/587/Add.6 is postponed to allow time for the Fifth Committee to review the programme budget implications of the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

(g) Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.7)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution entitled "Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership".

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/213).

The President: We next turn to the draft decision entitled "Note by the Secretary-General on the themes for the second high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to conclude its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

(h) Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.8)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 3 of its report.

The draft decision is entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 100

Environment and sustainable development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588 and Add.7)

The President: We turn first to the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/588.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/54/588?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to the four draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 21 of its report, contained in document A/54/588/Add.7.

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "Conservation and sustainable development of Central African forest ecosystems". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/214).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "World Solar Programme 1996-2005". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/215).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution III, entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 54/216).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution IV, entitled "Enhancing complementarities among international instruments related to environment and sustainable development". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 54/217).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 100.

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly".

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/218).

The President: The Assembly will now turn to the draft decision entitled "Documents relating to the

implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly".

May I consider that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

(b) International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of its report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements", which the Second Committee adopted. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/219).

The President: We turn now to draft resolution II, entitled "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon", which the Second Committee adopted. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/220).

The President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Alemán (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Ecuador had the honour of coordinating, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the negotiations on draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.43 on "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon".

With the adoption of this resolution, the General Assembly has taken one further step towards designing and applying an international multidisciplinary and intersectoral strategy to prevent the catastrophic effects of this cyclical phenomenon. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 52/200, the United Nations system and the international community have adopted practical and constructive measures in order better to understand the El Niño phenomenon. The setting up of a task force, the convening in Guayaquil of the first Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts, with the participation of 450 scientists from various regions of the world, and the publication of a technical and scientific document on the impact that this phenomenon had in 1997 and 1998, are clear examples of the positive action taken in the United Nations system.

My delegation would like to express particular gratitude to the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization for publishing that important work, which reflects the valuable contributions made by the international scientific community with regard to the El Niño phenomenon. We also extend our thanks to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and the International Council of Scientific Unions, for their important cooperation in making it possible.

The General Assembly has adopted resolution 54/220, thereby expressing its support for the establishment in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador, of an international research centre to investigate the El Niño phenomenon. The centre will make it possible to observe and monitor this phenomenon more closely. Information will be shared with the main regional and international oceanic and atmospheric observation centres. Cooperation with the United Nations system and the international community will make this important project a reality.

I should now like to refer to resolution 54/219, "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements", with regard to which the delegation of Ecuador was honoured to serve as coordinator, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the end of the Decade, the United Nations will have as a guide the international strategy for natural disaster reduction, which will continue to be the basic platform in this field. Preventive efforts will be essential in this regard. In January 2000, a task force and an inter-agency secretariat will be set up. My delegation hopes that this

process will draw on experience gained, and will benefit from the knowledge of the staff of the Decade's secretariat.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express, through you, Mr. President, our thanks to all representatives for their valuable contribution, as well as for their very constructive spirit during the entire negotiating process, which enabled us to arrive at a consensus on both resolutions. Their complete implementation, including in the administrative field, will be essential for ensuring respect for the will of the General Assembly on these important issues — the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon.

Ms. Päivöke (Finland): The European Union would like to take this opportunity to express its support for the statement made by the delegation of Ecuador on the two resolutions just adopted under sub-item (b) of agenda item 100, in particular on the resolution on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Diaster Reduction. The European Union shares the interest of Ecuador and attaches great importance to this matter.

We look forward to the full implementation of resolution 54/219, including the administration of the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. We are assured that these arrangements, and the implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction, will honour the letter and the spirit of the resolution just adopted and will fully utilize the experience gained and lessons learned during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

(c) Convention on Biological Diversity

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/221).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (c) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.4)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 8 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same.

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/222).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (d) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.5)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/223).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

(f) Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.6)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of its report (A/54/588/Add.6).

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

Draft resolution I was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/224).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/225).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 100?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 100 as a whole.

Agenda item 101 (*continued*)

Operational activities for development

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/589)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 16 of its report (A/53/589) and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 17 of the same report.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries".

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/226).

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/227).

The President: We turn now to the draft decision, entitled "Documents relating to operational activities for development".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 101.

Agenda item 102

Training and research

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/590)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 14 of its report (A/54/590).

The Second Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "United Nations Staff College in Turin, Italy". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/228).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "United Nations Institute for Training and Research", was adopted by the Second Committee. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/229).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 102?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 103

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/591)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 11 of its report (A/54/591).

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Zambia

The draft resolution was adopted by 145 votes to 3, with 6 abstentions (resolution 54/230).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Australia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 103?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 104

Globalization and interdependence

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/592)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 16 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence". May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/231).

The President: I call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Gallagher (United States of America): The United States joined the consensus on this resolution because we believe that, on balance, it represents a step forward in a number of areas.

On the issue of good governance, after lengthy debate the Second Committee was able to come to a consensus. We look forward to continuing and broadening this dialogue. Part of the way forward is to strengthen the support of the international community to developing countries so that they can develop the capacities, skills and institutions necessary to confront globalization.

But just as important is a fundamental understanding of the need for Governments to effectively manage their own development. The fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly has helped move the debate forward by recognizing that good governance is governance that is responsible to the needs of the people, based on efficient, participatory, transparent and accountable public service, policy-making processes and administration. This is an excellent working definition that can be strengthened by further developing concepts such as democracy and civil society. Strong democratic institutions and civil society organizations are critical in assuring that Governments are responsive to the needs of the people.

Globalization is having profound implications for the promotion of good governance, as this issue is no longer confined to national borders. On the one hand, globalization is encouraging Governments, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, to adopt policies to promote economic efficiency and growth. On the other hand, we are continuing to learn from the Asian financial crisis and other recent developments that transparency and disclosure are critical for healthy economies in which benefits of growth are widely shared. We must continue to work together to find shared approaches, principles and guidelines.

One thing is for sure: good governance is important for countries at all stages of development. Over the past several years, there has been widespread recognition that good governance is essential for sustainable development. In recent years, the significance of good governance has also become prominent among both the member countries of the international financial institutions and the management of those institutions. Bilaterally, donor partners have in place numerous programmes to help countries overcome governance problems. Nationally, many countries are talking openly about good governance as being critical for economic growth and development. With the support of the international community, many are in front in establishing effective mechanisms to improve governance.

As good governance has become a central pillar of economic growth and poverty alleviation, the United Nations and its agencies should continue progress on this critical issue.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

I call on the representative of Suriname on a point of order.

Mr. Kerpens (Suriname): I apologize for taking the floor once more.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the seventh and eleventh preambular paragraphs and to operative 8 of the resolution just adopted on the subject of globalization. In these paragraphs we again see the same mistake, namely, that the phrase "small island developing States" does not appear as it should. I would once more request that this phrase appear as "Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as was agreed.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 104?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 105

Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/593)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of its report.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty". May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/232).

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 105?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 12 *(continued)*

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/594)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the four draft decisions recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 16 of its report.

We turn first to draft decision I, entitled "United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (as expanded in 1999)".

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision I?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Second Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "Report of the Economic and Social Council". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: Draft decision III is entitled "Documents relating to the report of the Economic and Social Council". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision III?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President: Draft decision IV is entitled "Biennial programme of work of the Second Committee for 2000-2001". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision IV?

Draft decision IV was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of the chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council allocated to the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 20 *(continued)*

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

(b) Special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Draft resolution (A/54/L.74)

Draft resolution (A/54/L.76)

The President: The Assembly will now proceed to take action on two draft resolutions: under agenda item 20, draft resolution A/54/L.74, and under sub-item (b), draft resolution A/54/L.76.

I now give the floor to the representative of Guyana to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.74.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): It is a distinct honour for me, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Mexico and sponsors, to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.74, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development", for consideration and adoption by the Assembly under agenda item 20.

In addition to the sponsors listed on the draft before the Assembly, I am pleased to announce that the following countries have joined as sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Guatemala, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Tunisia, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Humanitarian emergencies have caused immeasurable human suffering, not to mention severe economic and social dislocation. As the Secretary-General has observed in his report on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, a particularly striking phenomenon has been the extraordinary rise in the number and scale of natural disasters and of their human and financial costs.

Natural calamities claimed the lives of more than 50,000 people worldwide in 1998. In the same year, the economic losses resulting from these occurrences were estimated to exceed $90 billion, compared to $30 billion in 1997. This, of course, is only part of the story. Not only has there been a need to wrestle with the increased onslaught of natural disasters, but the world community has had to face a growing incidence of complex humanitarian emergencies which afflict millions of people across the globe, resulting in untold suffering and death. We continue to be saddened and alarmed by these developments and by the disproportionate burden borne in such circumstances by the most vulnerable, especially women and children.

As we speak, the world is once again witness to the terrible fury of nature, which has brought death and destruction to thousands of people in Venezuela. The final toll of the disastrous flooding and mudslides that struck that country in recent days is yet to be fully reckoned. Already, however, it is recorded as the worst disaster to have hit the country this century.

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the sponsors, allow me to join you, Mr. President, in extending sincere condolences to the Government and people of Venezuela on the occasion of this national tragedy and to pledge our determination, as the international community, to support their efforts at recovery.

Against the realities to which I have referred, draft resolution A/54/L.74 represents, in our view, a timely and necessary, albeit modest, step towards a more concerted international action to address the humanitarian impact of natural disasters. The text before the Assembly is the result of open-ended informal consultations based on an initial draft put forward by the Group of 77 and China and Mexico.

This, it may be recalled, is the first such initiative to be proposed by the Group in over eight years, the last being that undertaken during the forty-sixth session which led to the consensus adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 46/182, which annexed landmark guiding principles of humanitarian assistance. These principles have inspired and guided the sponsors in the present exercise, but there has been a further motivation, and that is the sheer conviction that the time has come to once again focus international attention on the plight occasioned by natural disasters and on the necessity for enhanced international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in this field, proceeding from relief to development.

Beyond these fundamentals, the draft contains a number of provisions aimed at promoting action at various levels, with a view to maximizing the effectiveness of the response to natural disasters at both the national and international levels through enhanced international cooperation.

In this context, the improved coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance is a key element in enhancing the international response to crises in the humanitarian domain. The agreed conclusions on the theme of international cooperation and coordinated responses to humanitarian emergencies, in particular in the transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, which were adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in July 1999 provide an important building block for further action in this regard. We intend to work with all partners and with the Secretariat to fully implement these conclusions, as well as the draft before the Assembly.

In commending the draft resolution for adoption, I wish, on behalf of the sponsors, to express our appreciation for the work being done by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Sergio Vieiro de Mello, the staff of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to respond on a daily basis to the plight of millions throughout the world who need humanitarian assistance. At the same time, we take this opportunity to salute the teams of United Nations personnel who, together with their counterparts in other humanitarian agencies and local personnel, continue to labour to bring relief and hope to those suffering as a result of such emergencies. Indeed, many of those individuals serve at great risk to their personal safety and security, and some have lost their lives. On behalf of the sponsors, I wish to pay special homage to those who, recently and at other times in the past, have paid the maximum price in service to their fellow members of the human family.

In conclusion, let me also pay tribute to the Permanent Representative of Denmark, whose oversight and guidance on the issues pertaining to agenda item 20 were an invaluable contribution to the success of consultations on the present draft. I would also like to commend the excellent work done by Mr. Atul Khare of India in facilitating the consultations on the draft. Finally, a special word of appreciation goes to all our partners who participated actively and constructively in the

consultations on draft resolution A/54/L.74. Their contributions have greatly enriched the final product.

Before concluding, allow me to draw the attention of the Assembly to two corrections that need to be made to the text before the Assembly. The first is in the first preambular paragraph. After the words, "United Nations system", a comma should be inserted and the word "and" deleted. Following "December 1997", a comma should be inserted. A reference to draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.44, entitled "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements", should also be included.

In the first line of the second preambular paragraph, where reference is made to the report of the Secretary-General, the title of that report should be in quotes, beginning with the word "strengthening" and ending with the words "United Nations".

With these corrections, it is the hope of the sponsors that draft resolution L.74 will be adopted by consensus, and in that expectation I commend it to the Assembly for consideration.

Mr. Bivero (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Venezuela and the Member States that sponsored the draft resolution — Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Ireland, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay and Yemen — I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly for its consideration the draft resolution in document A/54/L.76, entitled "Assistance to Venezuela following the devastating floods and landslides".

In its preambular part, the draft resolution expresses the concern of the General Assembly at the human and material losses experienced by Venezuela as a result of the floods and massive landslides of recent days. On the basis of the magnitude of the problem that natural disasters represent for development, it recognizes that efforts at the national level need to be supplemented with international cooperation and assistance, particularly international emergency assistance. It takes note of the appeal of the Secretary-General to the international community for assistance to help with the effects of the disaster and of the appeal of the Government of Venezuela for emergency humanitarian assistance, as well as for the assistance necessary for the task of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

In the operative part, draft resolution A/54/L.76 expresses the solidarity of the international community with the people and Government of Venezuela at this difficult time. It appeals to all Member States, international organizations, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations to assist Venezuela in its relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, and expresses due gratitude to all States, organizations and groups that are have so generously assisted — and are assisting — Venezuela in the immediate relief work. Finally, the draft resolution expresses its gratitude to the Secretary-General for the urgent steps he has already taken to mobilize international assistance and requests him to make all necessary provisions to continue mobilizing and coordinating the assistance and cooperation that can be provided by the organizations and agencies of the United Nations in support of the national efforts of Venezuela.

On behalf of Venezuela and the Member States sponsoring draft resolution A/54/L.76, we would greatly appreciate the favourable consideration of the draft resolution by the General Assembly and its adoption as a manifestation of the solidarity and support of the international community in the face of the emergency being experienced by my country.

Venezuela is in mourning as a result of an unprecedented tragedy. Relentless rains produced flooding throughout our national territory last week. In the central zone, an area with significant urban settlements and economic infrastructure, massive landslides and floods occurred, sowing death and destruction on a terrifying scale. The number of people who have been injured, who have disappeared and who have died make this natural disaster the worst every experienced in Venezuela. We are certain that, strengthened by the unity of its people and Government in the face of this disaster and by the generous support of the community of nations, Venezuela will be able to face, with a renewed sense of faith and hope, the difficult tasks of emergency humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and reconstruction forced on us by this natural disaster.

I wish to offer our particular gratitude for the many messages of solidarity my country has received in recent days; to you, Sir, for your statement at the eighty-fifth plenary meeting in your capacity as President of the Assembly; to the Secretary-General for the message of support and condolence sent on behalf of him personally and of the Organization to the President of Venezuela; and to the coordinator of the Group of 77 for his recent statement, speaking on behalf of all members of the Group, China and Mexico.

In conclusion, I also wish to place on record the gratitude of my entire country and people for the generous assistance being given Venezuela by many States represented here, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. We offer them all our deepest thanks.

The President: I thank the representative of Venezuela for his renewed appeal on behalf of his embattled people and great country. International solidarity and assistance, I am sure, will be forthcoming in a generous way.

Mr. Lewis (Antigua and Barbuda): I speak on behalf of the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). In reality, it is a privilege to do so, albeit in reference to a most sad and disastrous occasion.

What has happened in Venezuela — and, indeed, what is happening in the Americas — causes us to reflect on the changes which this planet seems to be going through. Certainly, in the past 10 years, one has had to wonder if there has been any region affected and afflicted in the manner that Latin America and the Caribbean have been.

From an environmental perspective, we have had the woes of earthquakes; we have had the perils of volcanoes — the most recent, of course, being the plight of the Monserratans; we have the knowledge that there is an underground volcano off Grenada; and last year and this, we have had two late-season hurricanes coming in the month of November, which have caused us much concern as to the future. We know that the scientists are debating whether this is due to global warming, with their arguments pro and con. But what we are most concerned about is what is being done to try and alleviate the plight of the people who have suffered.

Presently, we do not know how many people were killed in the floods and the mud slides in Venezuela. Estimates range up to 20,000 and perhaps even more. When we think of the deaths, we have to think of the corresponding families that might be affected through loss of wage-earners and the like.

To the people of the Caribbean, the affliction in Venezuela is of particular concern, not only because Venezuela is in reality a Caribbean country, having a large Caribbean coastline. Many know of the island of Margarita, which is certainly in the Caribbean, but closer to us in the eastern Caribbean, right within our waters, is Aves Island, located very close to Dominica. We have had a history of involvement with Venezuela, going back to the days of slavery. Francisco de Miranda, *El Precursor* himself, got support and inspiration from his visits to Haiti and Jamaica in launching the revolutionary struggle; so, too, did Simon Bolívar. So there has been this initial connection, to the extent that a St. Lucian seaman died in the struggle for Venezuela's independence.

We are therefore deeply connected to Venezuela and it is with a sense of pride and achievement that, when those of us from the CARICOM States visit the National Pantheon in Venezuela and walk in the path of heroes adorned by statues on either side, we see prominently displayed El Negro Primero. We consider this to be part of our contribution.

The people of Venezuela are a sturdy people, a hard-working people — a people devoted to family, to hamlet, to village, to country. In reality, it mirrors a lot of what is in the island Caribbean in that it is a very polyglot society, drawing on the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe. There, we find a mixture, both phenotypical and cultural, of the Maghreb, of Africa south of the Sahara, of Iberia and of genuine Americana.

Now that we are closer together in the Association of Caribbean States and remember the many occasions on which Venezuela has come to the assistance of the English-speaking Caribbean States — and knowing that it has done so not expecting anything in return, save only the knowledge that it has lent a helping hand — it causes the people of our region to be affected physically, in an emotional manner. It causes us to be affected mentally, through profound concern. It causes us to be affected spiritually, with brotherly and sisterly affection.

And so, on behalf of all the countries for which I speak, I appeal for draft resolution A/54/L.76 to be adopted unanimously and that we work towards alleviating the plight of the Venezuelan people.

Mr. Pérez-Otermin (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The item before us is of the greatest importance to mankind, and it is for that reason that my country would like to demonstrate its solidarity by expressing its full support for draft resolutions A/54/L.74, which is of a general nature, and A/54/L.76, which deals specifically with the situation in the sisterly Republic of Venezuela.

As a member of the Latin American family, we cannot fail to point out that our region, and the subregion of the Caribbean and Central America in particular, has been one of the regions most battered by natural disasters in recent months. The physical damage and the loss of human life have been truly significant. The latter cannot be repaired. The former is where cooperation and international solidarity can help mitigate the consequences.

It seems to be a constant that natural disasters vent their fury on the poorest regions and peoples, for which recovery is so much more costly. That is why our efforts should be aimed at both preventive action and at providing cooperation for recovery and, ultimately, development. The recent case in the sisterly Republic of Venezuela has once again brought sorrow to the heart of the whole region. The material loss is incalculable, but even more painful is the fact that the exact number of lives lost may never be known and all the victims may not be identified.

As it has done in the case of previous disasters that have struck the region, the Government and the people of my country responded immediately to the appeal for solidarity. We are able to announce that the first flight of an air force Hercules C-130 filled with food, medicine and clothing will depart today from our capital bound for Caracas. That shipment includes mostly milk, corned beef, rice, blankets and so on. A second flight will depart in January and will also contain a water purification plant and engineers and technicians to install it and set it in operation.

We are certain that the feelings that brought about this spontaneous act by the Government and the people of Uruguay are equally felt by other States, both within and outside the region, and that most of them will contribute to mitigating the consequences of this disaster.

Mr. Relang (Marshall Islands): At the outset, we wish to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Venezuela for the recent tragedy that has destroyed lives and property.

I wish to make this brief statement on behalf of the 10 South Pacific Forum member States represented in New York, namely, Australia, the Republic of the Fiji Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, New Zealand, the Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and my own country, the Republic of the Marshall Islands. I wish to make this statement with regard to the draft resolution contained in document A/54/L.74, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development", which is to be adopted by the Assembly.

We also wish to express our thanks to the Permanent Mission of India for its superb and excellent work in coordinating this draft resolution.

The member States of the South Pacific Forum fully support this draft resolution. As a subregion that is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters resulting from violent tropical cyclones, El Niño, tsunamis, tidal waves, droughts, brush fires and earthquakes, we are committed to supporting the remarkable role played by the United Nations and its response system, including its engagement with many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, in the delivery of much-needed relief assistance to our peoples.

We recently witnessed again innocent people being affected by severe earthquakes in the East New Britain Province of Papua New Guinea and by the earthquake that took place during the first week of this month in the Republic of Vanuatu, which caused death and injuries and left several thousand homeless.

We have seen that even in times of dire financial strife, this Organization has demonstrated its comparative advantage in attracting international attention and mobilizing a concerted and timely response to the plight of hundreds of thousands worldwide who have had their lives and those of their families shattered simply because of meteorological and seismic forces beyond their control.

The draft resolution universally affirms the fundamental importance of our collective effort to strengthen international cooperation in accordance with the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality. We agree that the assistance provided by the United Nations, from relief to development, should be determined on the basis of human needs arising from the adverse impact of a natural disaster. Where national and

regional mechanisms exist, the United Nations should make optimal use of those channels, for the very reason that those on the ground are usually the first to respond and are more attuned to understanding the social and cultural sensitivities of the communities in and around the disaster area.

The memories of earthquakes in Japan and Turkey, the recent floods in India and Viet Nam — our Asian neighbours — even worse floods and mud slides in Venezuela, and the grave destruction caused by hurricanes Jose and Lenny in the Caribbean and the territories of that region, are stern reminders that prevention and preparedness at the national level of developing countries can never be fully sufficient. Given the economic situation of developing countries in our region, we are pleased that the Assembly calls upon the United Nations Development Programme and other bodies of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization, to strengthen their operational activities and capacity-building in natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness.

We pledge our strong support for continued improvement of our regional and national efforts for enhanced partnerships with civil society and to establish national strategies to maximize disaster preparedness and response, including the rehabilitation and reconstruction of areas affected by natural disasters. In this regard, we agree that the Economic and Social Council should continue to develop ways to enhance further the effectiveness of international cooperation and coordination in the provision of timely and commensurate humanitarian assistance to effectively respond to natural disasters. We note in this regard the importance of maintaining support for natural disaster funding in the face of growing pressure on declining levels of official development assistance.

We welcome the reference to the use of space-based technologies for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters in vulnerable societies. In this respect, we from the Pacific wish to place on record our collective appreciation to those countries which have assisted us in this regard, especially Australia, Japan, the United States and New Zealand.

We also especially welcome efforts to expand the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) roster to include more representatives from the countries of Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, Latin America and the Caribbean. We note that UNDAC team members would be financed solely by the Governments of the countries that the team members represent. We stress, however, that we in the Pacific would prefer the use of team members from the Pacific, because the preservation of our particular cultural values may not be easily understood by others.

In this respect, we would emphasize the need for funding the deployment of team members from vulnerable societies such as ours to natural-disaster zones within the Pacific. We note that this is not provided for in this draft resolution, but we would nevertheless wish to emphasize this special need.

The Pacific Island Forum countries strongly stress the need for increased attention to disaster preparedness, including funds from international cooperation in natural disasters. We feel that a critical component of an effective response system is to have simple, less bureaucratic procedures to release funds for this purpose. We emphasize that contributions made for humanitarian assistance in times of natural disaster should not be to the detriment of resources earmarked for international development assistance or complex humanitarian emergencies. We agree that the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and other appropriate contingency funds should be enhanced and more actively used for timely response in order to enhance stability among those affected, thereby reducing the risks to the wider population of the country and the region.

Our countries look forward to working closely with all interested delegations on innovative mechanisms to increase funding and draw from existing organizations, both public and private, involved in humanitarian assistance and natural-disaster prevention.

Finally, we believe that strengthened national efforts are central to timely and effective disaster response. No amount of institutional reform can provide a panacea to the problems relating to the coordination of humanitarian assistance, as each country, region and type of natural disaster has its own characteristics, which affect the impact on life, property and environment. In this regard, we appreciate the genuine efforts by those institutions at all levels to develop a cohesive and integrated approach to disaster prevention and relief, and we reaffirm our confidence in the current successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/54/L.74 and A/54/L.76.

The Assembly will first take a decision under agenda item 20 on draft resolution A/54/L.74, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters from relief to development".

I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.74: Bangladesh, Ecuador, Fiji, Haiti, Seychelles and Togo.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.74?

Draft resolution A/54/L.74 was adopted (resolution 54/233).

The President: The Assembly, under sub-item (b) of agenda item 20, will now turn to draft resolution A/54/L.76, entitled "Assistance to Venezuela following the devastating floods and landslides".

I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.76: Bangladesh, Comoros, Fiji, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Namibia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Uganda and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.76?

Draft resolution A/54/L.76 was adopted (resolution 54/96 K).

The President: I am sure members will join me, on behalf of the General Assembly, in thanking Ambassador Jørgen Bøjer of Denmark, who again undertook the task of holding consultations and negotiations on the resolutions adopted under agenda item 20.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 20.

Agenda item 46 *(continued)*

Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/54/L.75)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on this item at its 74th and 75th plenary meetings on 8 and 9 December 1999.

I now give the floor to the representative of Cameroon to introduce draft resolution A/54/L.75.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I should like to express to the people of Venezuela, who have been so sorely tried, the sympathy, condolences, support and active solidarity of the African Group.

Since the adoption by the Assembly of resolution 53/92, the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871) has been on the agenda of the main bodies of the United Nations. Such was the case in the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session in 1999. Such has also been the case in the Security Council, which, in September this year, discussed the progress report of the Secretary-General(S/1999/1008). On 8 and 9 December 1999, the Assembly discussed the issue in a debate in which 12 delegations took part, two of which spoke on behalf of the regional groups.

The draft resolution under consideration today, A/54/L.75, which summarizes the decisions taken and concerns expressed in the various bodies, sets out directions and a future framework for the concerted and coordinated implementation of the recommendations to promote durable peace in Africa. We should recall that it aims to do so through the elimination of conflicts and poverty eradication. The preambular part of the draft resolution recalls, in addition to the conclusions of the United Nations bodies, the resolutions relating to the launching of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. It also stresses the need for coordinated follow-up by initiatives for the development of Africa.

The operative part of the draft resolution suggests that the General Assembly take a number of decisions. First, it would take note of the conclusions adopted by the Economic and Social Council, especially the decision to hold a high-level debate on Africa in 2001. It would also invite the development partners of Africa to work towards the implementation of the agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council. In order to make

activities for the development of Africa fast and efficient, it is proposed that the General Assembly establish an open-ended working group, which would have a dual mandate. It would be responsible for monitoring the implementation both of the recommendations of the Secretary-General and of the agreed conclusions of the in Economic and Social Council, in particular determining actions to be taken as a matter of urgency with regard to poverty eradication, debt relief, the struggle against pandemics such as AIDS and the provision of support to countries in post-conflict situations.

The working methods of the working group are also set out in the draft resolution. It will be chaired by the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, assisted by two vice-chairpersons. An organizational meeting of the working group is provided for, to be held not later than in March 2000. Finally, the Secretary-General is requested to provide the working group with all necessary assistance, as he has promised to do. He is also requested to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

Great importance is attached not only to the report of the Secretary-General but also to that to be submitted by the working group, inasmuch as both of those documents will have to contain elements conducive to facilitating the decisions of the heads of State at the Millennium Summit, within the framework of the theme of peace, security and development.

Those are the main points and ideas of draft resolution A/54/L.75, which I have the honour to introduce to the Assembly on behalf of the African States.

In concluding, I should like to express our deep gratitude to the European Union, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, which participated in the consultations and enriched the initial draft. The African Group also benefited from the inestimable support and contributions of the Group of 77 and China.

Finally, I should like to say that the African Group has been joined as sponsors by the countries members of the Group of 77 and China, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France and the United States. The draft resolution has also been sponsored by Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Greece, Guyana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Suriname, Sweden and the United Kingdom. On behalf of Africa, I thank them for their support, which will be offered not only when the draft resolution is adopted by consensus, but also, and above all, when the agreed conclusions are implemented. In that way the States Members of the United Nations will contribute to ensuring that Africa remains what it should never cease to be: a favoured partner of the United Nations and its Member countries, in particular the developed countries.

Africa is waiting. It is waiting for the international community to accompany it as it is reborn at the dawn of the twenty-first century and of the third millennium. Africa will remember.

The President: I should like to announce that, since the introduction of draft resolution A/54/L.75, the following countries have become co-sponsors: Guinea-Bissau and Haiti.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/54/L.75.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/54/L.75?

Draft resolution A/54/L.75 was adopted (resolution 54/234).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 56.

Agenda item 39 (*continued*)

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

The President: The co-sponsors of draft resolution A/54/L.23 on a code of democratic conduct and the co-sponsors of the amendments thereto, contained in document A/54/L.46, have decided to withdraw these proposals.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 39?

It was so decided.

Postponement of the date of recess

The President: I should like to draw the attention of members to a matter relating to the date of recess of the current session.

Members will recall that at its 82nd plenary meeting on 16 December 1999, the General Assembly decided that the fifty-fourth session would recess on Wednesday, 22 December 1999.

However, as the Fifth Committee has not concluded its work, the General Assembly will therefore not be able to conclude its work today. I should like, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that it postpone its date of recess until tomorrow, Thursday, 23 December 1999.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to this proposal?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations A/54/PV.88

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

88th plenary meeting
Thursday, 23 December 1999, 6 p.m.
New York

President: Gurirab ..... (Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 8.50 p.m.

Agenda item 99

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(f) Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s

Report of the Second Committee (A/54/587/Add.6)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/693)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 9 of its report (A/54/587/Add.6) and on the draft decision recommended by the Second Committee in paragraph 10 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution, entitled "Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s".

The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution is contained in document A/54/693.

The Second Committee adopted the draft resolution. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/235).

The President: We shall now turn to the draft decision, entitled "Documents relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s".

The Second Committee adopted the draft decision. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 99?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Second Committee before it.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 117, 120, 123, 125, 126, 142, 143, 150 and 172, 151, 163, 164, 166, 173, 12, 119, 124, 121 and 118.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Jan Piotr Jaremczuk of Poland, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

00-22263 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Mr. Jaremczuk (Poland), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the great honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee on the agenda items it considered during the main part of the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly. It should be noted that during the main part of the session the Fifth Committee dealt with 25 agenda items that were allocated to it.

Concerning agenda item 12 entitled, "Report of the Economic and Social Council", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/668. In paragraph 4 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it decide to take note of the relevant chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council, namely chapters I, VII (sections B and C) and IX. That draft decision was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 117, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/506/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of document A/54/506/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 118, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in documents A/54/511 and A/54/511/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of document A/54/511/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions. Both draft decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 119, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999", the report of the Committee is contained in documents A/54/508 and A/54/508/Add.1, and in paragraph 6 of the latter document the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 120, entitled "Programme planning", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/676. In paragraph 8 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 121, entitled "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/691. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of five draft resolutions, all of which were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 123, entitled "Joint Inspection Unit", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/507/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft decision, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 124, entitled "Pattern of conferences", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/690. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee later adopted without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 125, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/685. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution and of two draft decisions. The draft resolution and both draft decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 126, entitled "United Nations common system", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/677. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 142, entitled "Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/678. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 143, entitled "Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed

in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/679. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 150, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone", and item 172, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/686. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 151, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/684. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft resolutions, three draft decisions and one oral draft decision on the question of death and disability benefits. The draft resolutions, the three draft decisions and the oral decision were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

With regard to agenda item 163, entitled "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/673. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Regarding agenda item 164, entitled "Human resources management", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/54/680. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Concerning agenda item 166, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/674. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which the Committee adopted without a vote.

Finally, in connection with agenda item 173, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/54/687. In that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless otherwise indicated.

Agenda item 117 (*continued*)

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/506/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/13 B).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

Agenda item 120

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/676)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/236).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 120.

Agenda item 123 (*continued*)

Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/507/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 123.

Agenda item 125 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/685)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report and the two draft decisions recommended in paragraph 10 of the same report.

We turn first to the draft resolution, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/237 A to C).

The President: We will now turn to draft decision I, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: We now turn to draft decision II, entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 125.

Agenda item 126

United Nations common system

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/677)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The

Committee adopted the draft resolution entitled "United Nations common system: report of the International Civil Service Commission" without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/238).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 142

Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/678)

The President: The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/239).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 142.

Agenda item 143

Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/679)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/240).

The President: I call on the representative of Finland, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Kääriäinen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union was pleased to join the consensus on the adoption of resolutions 54/239 and 54/240. The European Union has continuously supported the work of the International Criminal Tribunals. For that reason, we had hoped to have adequate time to address the issues related to the proposed budgets thoroughly. As we have said, it is fundamentally important for the Tribunals to be able to carry out their functions effectively and with an efficient use of resources. We have expressed our concern about the important issues relating to administrative functions that remain to be addressed. We are pleased that the resolutions just adopted will allow a thorough discussion of these issues while guaranteeing that the functioning of the Tribunals will not be hampered in any way.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 143.

Agenda items 150 and 172

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/686)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/241).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 150 and 172.

Agenda item 151 (*continued*)

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/684)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 13 of its report and on the four draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 14 of the same report.

The Assembly will first turn to draft resolution I, entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/242).

The President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/243).

The President: The Assembly will now turn to draft decision I, entitled "Placement of the Republic of Kiribati for peacekeeping assessments".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: Draft decision II is entitled "Placement of the Republic of Nauru for peacekeeping assessments".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision III, entitled "Placement of Tonga for peacekeeping assessments", without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision III was adopted.

The President: Draft decision IV is entitled "Death and disability benefits".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision IV without a vote. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to do likewise?

Draft decision IV was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 151.

Agenda item 163

Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/673)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (54/244).

The President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 163.

Agenda item 164

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/680)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 164.

Agenda item 166

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/674)

The President: The Assembly will now proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/245).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 166.

Agenda item 173

Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/687)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/54/687).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/246).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 173.

Agenda item 12 (*continued*)

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/668)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 4 of its report (A/54/668).

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of those chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council which were allocated to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 119

Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/508/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/54/508/Add.1).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 54/247).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 119.

Agenda item 124

Pattern of conferences

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/690)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/54/690).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolutions 54/248 A to E).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 121

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/691)

The President: I call on the representative of the United States of America for an explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Hays (United States of America): I wish to comment on agenda item 121, "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001". This year's programme budget process was an exhausting one for all involved. Nonetheless, we believe that the outcome reflects in large measure the combined interests of many nations and regional groupings. Any process that involves 188 Member States and that aims for fairness and transparency will inevitably entail a rigorous debate that requires each nation to prioritize its goals. Creativity and flexibility are essential if consensus is to be achieved. That was certainly the case this year and we wish to express our gratitude to the many Member States that approached this process openly and were ready and willing to engage in substantive negotiations on the merits of the United Nations budget. That the product of this arduous shared effort is a budget premised on fiscal discipline is a tribute to the shared interest of Member States in a United Nations that is more streamlined, efficient and effective than ever before.

As we have indicated, the United States is unable to associate itself with the consensus on this budget because it is not in keeping with our national policy requiring strict budget discipline. It is our view, however, that this budget represents an important step in the direction of a revitalized United Nations that is stronger and more relevant than ever before. Setting this world body on a sound footing requires more than simply balancing the budget; it requires the active participation of the family of nations coming together around a common set of priorities and embracing sound management principles. We sense a growing awareness of this need within this body and an increased commitment to meeting it.

For our part, we believe that the United States has, as a priority, set a course that, once completed, will strengthen the underpinnings of this institution. Our Government is committed to working vigorously towards resolving the arrears issue with the active participation of the Member States over the course of the next year.

We feel that this budget is sound and structured to meet the Secretary-General's priorities, while adhering to the mandate given to this body to operate responsibly and within financial limits. For the future, the United States wishes to express its firm support for a budget process that is transparent and efficient and adheres to the policies endorsed by the General Assembly and the Secretariat regarding budget and personnel practices.

Overall, we are pleased to say that this process has brought us closer together in our common commitment to the United Nations global agenda.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the five draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report (A/54/691).

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001".

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 54/249).

The President: Draft resolution II, entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 54/250).

The President: Draft resolution III, entitled "Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 54/251).

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution IV, entitled "Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2000-2001", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 54/252).

The President: Draft resolution V, entitled "Working capital fund for the biennium 2000-2001", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly likewise wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution V was adopted (resolution 54/253).

The President: I now call on those representatives wishing to explain their positions on the resolutions just adopted.

Mr. Kääriäinen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union expresses its deep appreciation to the coordinator for agenda item 121, Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo of Uganda, for a truly outstanding job. We want to express our gratitude and admiration also to the Controller, Mr. Jean-Pierre Halbwachs, to the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, Mr. Warren Sach, and to their team. Over the past weeks, along with the Fifth Committee secretariat, and in particular Ms. Nora Benary, they have served the Committee in its informal consultations tirelessly and with grace in the context of the very difficult modus operandi of the Committee.

The European Union approached the negotiations on the proposed programme budget determined to review each and every section of the budget on its own merits. We wanted to see the United Nations perform effectively, with budgetary discipline, efficiency and an overall approach of getting value for money.

During the negotiations, the European Union was never guided by a need to reach a "benchmark" on the budget. Furthermore, we made an honest effort to meet the substantive concerns of other delegations, such as those belonging to the Group of 77. The result reflects the objectives of all delegations. We would, however, have preferred a more dynamic budget, more oriented towards the priorities of the Organization.

We are happy that the budget has been adopted without a vote. That reflects the spirit of resolution 41/213.

Mr. Barnwell (Guyana): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The adoption of the draft resolutions on which we have just taken action concludes protracted, arduous, intense and painful negotiations. During the entire negotiating process, the Group of 77 and China participated in a spirit of mutual understanding, cooperation and great flexibility. However, we regret to note that some of our negotiating partners took totally unrealistic positions, which made the process very complex and cumbersome.

The Group of 77 and China recognize the role of the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer of the Organization under Article 97 of the Charter. It is his responsibility to submit to the General Assembly for its consideration and approval the proposed programme budget of the Organization under the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. In accordance with the Regulations and Rules, the Secretary-General has to submit the proposed programme budget on the basis of the General Assembly's decisions on the budget outline.

The Group of 77 and China reaffirm that the level of resources for the programme budget should be adequate for full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities. There cannot be any arbitrary decision to lower the level of resources or to impose a ceiling which could have an adverse impact on effective programme delivery. The allocation of resources to the budget has to be justified on the basis of the requirements of output delivery and the priorities set in the Medium Term Plan, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

We recall that, at one stage during the negotiating process, efforts were made to take decisions outside the Fifth Committee. In this regard, the Group wishes to reaffirm the role of the Fifth Committee under rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, by which the Committee is entrusted with considering all administrative, financial and budgetary questions.

We would like to conclude by stating that the Group of 77 and China remain attached to the current budgetary process, which should be fully respected. In that connection, the Group stresses that any changes in that process must be subject for prior consideration and approval by the General Assembly. We would like to

underscore that it is the exclusive prerogative of the General Assembly to determine and decide on the budgetary process.

The Group of 77 and China regret that the negotiating process throughout the consultations on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 left room for improvement. The conditions under which the Fifth Committee was forced to work did not promote smooth and transparent negotiations. The extraordinary delay in the submission of a number of documents multiplied the difficulties faced by the Committee during the process. That caused extreme difficulties, particularly for small delegations. We emphasize that in the future the Secretariat should submit all documents in accordance with the six-week rule. And all draft resolutions with financial implications should be submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 13 of General Assembly decision 34/401.

Finally, the Group would like to express its deep appreciation for the efforts made by the coordinator for this agenda item, Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo of Uganda. His tireless efforts helped the Committee reach consensus on this important agenda item. We also appreciate the commendable efforts made by all the Secretariat staff and their invaluable assistance to the Fifth Committee in this prolonged negotiating process.

Mr. Duval (Canada): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and Canada in explanation of position following the adoption of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

We are pleased that, overall, fiscal discipline has been maintained. We are also pleased that considerable savings have been achieved to compensate for increased costs. The Fifth Committee agreed to some justifiable reductions in the new budget as well as to some additional proposals.

Such negotiations inevitably entail political compromises on the part of all delegations, but the fact remains that the Secretary-General, in his role as chief administrative officer of the Organization, had not requested most of these additional proposals. Nor were the proposals reviewed and scrutinized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions or by the Committee on Programme and Coordination.

In our view, significant departures from the Secretary-General's proposals and from the advice of the expert bodies mandated to review the budget undermine the established budgetary and programme procedures of the United Nations.

In his statement on the proposed programme budget, Ambassador Fowler, speaking on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and Canada, stated our desire to see a more concise budget resolution that focused on governance issues and not on administrative minutiae. Unfortunately, that was not the case. We will continue to advocate a more strategic approach.

We regret that one Member State was unable to join the consensus, but we take note of the explanation given. Nonetheless, we are pleased with the outcome and join in the consensus.

Negotiations have been lengthy, difficult and delicate. We would, of course, have preferred an outcome in which no additions were made to the original proposals of the Secretary-General. However, we recognize that compromises were necessary in order to achieve the desired result. We welcome this agreement and urge all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the coordinator of the resolution, Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo of Uganda, for his tireless efforts, and Mr. Warren Sach and the personnel of the Budget Division for their high level of professionalism and for the expert advice they provided to the Committee in the pursuit of its goals.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Cameroon is speaking on behalf of the African Group at this meeting devoted to the budget. Since this is the last meeting of the fifty-fourth session to be held before the third millennium, I would like to convey the views of the African Group on the chairing of our work to date and on the budget.

First of all, Mr. President, regarding the way our work has been guided, the African Group is pleased to say that you have shouldered this task with great diplomacy and wisdom and, above all, with clear-sightedness. The African Group feels that during the first part of the session you have been a good President, a very good President — in fact, an excellent President. You have continued this tradition of excellence, which began with Alex Quaison-Sackey, Angie Brooks, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Salim Ahmed Salim, Paul Lusaka, Joseph Garba and Amara Essy. The African Group is proud of you.

I should now like to turn to the resolution regarding the budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

The African Group joined the consensus and would like to congratulate those who helped achieve it: our experts in the Fifth Committee, naturally; the Bureau of the Fifth Committee; the Group of 77 and China; and our partners. They have made considerable efforts and spent sleepless nights to provide our Organization with its first budget for the twenty-first century. This resolution, however, does give rise to certain considerations on the part of the African Group.

First, we take note of the fact that the global level of resources is for the most part below that requested by the Secretary-General, who more than anyone is aware of the genuine needs of our Organization. Of course, we regret that. Significant reductions were made to attain this level of consensus. We hope that those reductions will not have an adverse impact on the implementation of the various programmes mandated here.

The African Group welcomes the importance accorded to certain projects to which it attaches particular significance, notably to the United Nations Centre in Nairobi. We are gratified to note that the required resources were allocated to provide this Centre, by 1 January 2001, with a permanent interpretation system. We would also like to mention the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, as well as the revitalization of Swahili and of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime.

This list would have been even more striking if our partners had, despite budgetary constraints, given favourable consideration to the request for use of the positive balance relating to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. We hope that this has merely been postponed and can be done later.

The General Assembly in plenary has had the working hours of the Fifth Committee imposed on it, and, in view of the lateness of the hour, I shall conclude.

We are now only a few days from Christmas and the New Year. So to you, Mr. President, to all of our colleagues and to each Ambassador — that is to say, all those who work for peace — I wish to say, "Happy holidays and a happy New Year".

Mrs. Aragon (Philippines): First of all, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Guyana speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. My delegation has noted that the level of resources for the biennium 2000-2001, which we have just approved, is lower than the amount proposed by the Secretary-General.

My delegation hopes that the level of resources which we have just approved will enable the Secretary-General to implement fully and effectively all mandated programmes and activities, in particular those activities with respect to the budget sections relating to international and regional cooperation for development.

Since we have just adopted this budget, we would like to join others in appealing to all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

Regarding section 27C of the programme budget, my delegation wishes to place on the record its continuing reservations regarding section V, paragraph 22, of General Assembly resolution 53/221. We will pursue this question under the agenda item on human resources management at the first resumed session of the Fifth Committee.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to thank the coordination of agenda item 121, on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo, representative of Uganda, for the manner in which he conducted informal consultations on this item.

My delegation would also like to thank all the Secretariat officials who provided us with their technical assistance during the informal consultations, as well as all delegations that participated in the informal consultations.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 121.

Agenda item 118

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/54/511/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I, entitled "Action taken on certain items", without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "Biennial programme of work of the Fifth Committee for 2000-2001", without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 118.

Agenda item 12 *(continued)*

Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/54/3 and Add.1)

The President: Members will recall that chapters I to VI, sections A to C of chapter VII, and chapters VIII and IX of the report of the Economic and Social Council were assigned for consideration directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to take note of those chapters and sections of the report?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of those chapters and sections of the report of the Economic and Social Council that were assigned for consideration in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: May I also take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 12?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President: With regard to the programme of work of the General Assembly — apart from organizational matters and items that may have to be considered by operation of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and bearing in mind the action already taken by the Assembly thus far — I should like to propose that the following agenda items remain open for consideration during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly: 10, 11, 15, 17, 20, 22, 27, 37, 38, 42 to 44, 46 to 50, 59 to 61, 63, 90, 97, 99, 101, 106, 110, 116, 117 to 151, 160, 163, 164, 166, 169, 170, 172 and 173.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly that those agenda items remain open for consideration during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

Statement by the President

The President: Before suspending this session of the General Assembly, I would like to offer some observations and assessments of what we have done so far. At the close of the general debate in October, I did the same by underlining certain issues and directions.

To begin with, during the first three months of its work, the General Assembly considered 148 items. All in all, we had a total of 174 agenda items. Despite the divergence of the views presented by various delegations and political differences on some of the issues, the atmosphere in the General Assembly's deliberations was businesslike and characterized by cooperation and mutual respect. The Assembly adopted some 250 resolutions, about 180 of them by consensus, and 77 decisions, on those issues that are of major concern to the Members and the Organization.

As regards the Security Council, many speakers addressed the following issues: humanitarian intervention; conflict situations in Africa; regional initiatives; sanctions; and reform of the Council itself, including its expansion, representativeness, transparency, openness

and working methods. Some delegations praised the improvement in its format — more open meetings — while others reiterated calls for a more analytical Council report on the ongoing activities and inclusion of more information on its informal consultations of the whole. A large number of delegations stated that humanitarian intervention without the Council's authorization is unacceptable, yet even they accepted that the subject must still be discussed in appropriate forums. Concerns were expressed by Member States over the Council's slow response to the conflicts in Africa, and they called for a more balanced approach to important events, especially in respect of United Nations peacekeeping and financing, where speed and even-handedness were called for.

During the debate on the enlargement of the membership of the Security Council, 85 speakers — a record number — took the floor in plenary meeting. The tone of the comprehensive exchange of views on this subject was more encouraging than in past years, although wide areas of differences persist concerning cluster 1 issues and the exercise of the veto. Most delegations continued to insist on a more representative Council to reflect changes in the world since the Second World War, and to enhance the Council's credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness. Clearly, this is one of the main challenges that the United Nations is going to be facing in 2000.

Although all members shared the same belief that there is an urgent need now for changes in the composition and methods of work of the Security Council to prevent an endemic gridlock, it became clear once again that no concrete conclusions could be drawn at this time.

The Assembly devoted three meetings to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. During the debate, the following major points emerged: globalization and the international financial crisis; the decline of official development assistance and debt-relief initiatives; good governance; people-centred development; poverty eradication; the creation of productive employment opportunities; basic social services; and the role of civil society in decision-making, resource allocation, development and human security.

It was stressed that while some countries enjoyed economic growth and the benefits of globalization, the vulnerable economies of the developing countries continued to be negatively affected by uncontrolled circumstances. In this light, the forthcoming special session, which will be held in Geneva in 2000, should serve as a crucial pillar in the deliberations on the redesign of the global financial architecture.

The consensus was that the commitments agreed upon at Copenhagen should be reaffirmed and transformed into concrete realities. The special session should identify progress made and obstacles encountered in implementing the Programme of Action, and agree on new initiatives. What is needed is a frank assessment of the factors hampering implementation and progress.

On the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the Secretary-General stated that urgent priority should be given to Africa. This must be reflected in the budget and priorities set by the General Assembly. He also expressed the view that the Assembly should establish its own working group to take stock of the progress so far in implementing the proposals contained in his earlier report, which was extensively discussed by both the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as other United Nations bodies.

The Secretary-General further proposed that the working group focus on new ways to mobilize assistance to post-conflict societies, including debt cancellation. He added that while almost every agency and operational arm of the United Nations had a special programme devoted to Africa, and even though the Organization had spent generous amounts of its resources on the continent, the United Nations still needed to be more involved in Africa and play a more effective role, as it does elsewhere, without undue preconditions. In this connection, I intend to announce soon the names of the two coordinators for the working group. To make the conflicts in Africa a fixation — even an obsession — would not do justice to the people who are trying so hard every day to carry out the necessary political, economic and legislative reforms and to devote their time and energies to ensure sustained peace, stability and development.

The eradication of poverty is an essential prerequisite for development. The more Africa has worked, however, the fewer benefits it has drawn from its efforts. There are severe problems, such as those relating to financing, a skilled labour force and the difficult struggle against widespread epidemics. For example, the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic must be intensified because it is a threat to the very existence of many African countries. The United Nations must, more than ever, take the leadership to combat this

devastating menace and help save millions of lives. This year's collaboration between the United Nations and civil society on World AIDS Day was most laudable. It set a wonderful example worth pursuing further, on an ongoing basis.

Under the item on emergency assistance to individual countries, the Assembly adopted 19 resolutions, to provide emergency international assistance to regions and individual countries, including the Balkans, Central America, Venezuela — which is particularly affected at the present time — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Afghanistan, East Timor, Tajikistan, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and others. In this context, Mr. Jørgen Bøjer, the Permanent Representative of Denmark, was industrious and imaginative in taking the time to coordinate the negotiations to reach consensus on the many draft resolutions that were eventually adopted by the Assembly. I wish, on behalf of the General Assembly, to thank him for his outstanding service.

Dialogue among civilizations has continued to draw the serious attention of Member States. The General Assembly adopted a resolution on this important subject and invited Governments and other interested parties to further intensify their actions to promote widely the concept of dialogue among civilizations. The Islamic Republic of Iran has provided committed leadership by spearheading an open-ended and robust dialogue on the subject at the United Nations and by inviting influential personalities from outside to share their thoughts with United Nations representatives. Let us keep this dialogue alive and lively.

The importance of the item on oceans and the law of the sea was underscored by several speakers, and the Assembly adopted three resolutions. The need for wider acceptance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its consistent application was stressed by many, as was the importance of the harmonization of national legislation with its provisions. Throughout the debate, the responsible use and sustainable development of ocean resources was highlighted. So, too, was the protection and preservation of the marine environment and the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for land-based sources of pollution and maritime safety.

Assistance in mine action was discussed at length and a resolution was adopted. The speakers repeated their outrage at the destructive effects of landmines, expressed their concern over the humanitarian suffering and socio-economic impact of landmines and noted the need for a continued commitment of the international community in the field of clearing anti-personnel landmines. Another major contribution to disarmament was the adoption by the Assembly of the resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone for Central Asia. The adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism is another key achievement. This timely action will fill a lacuna in the international law on terrorism and further strengthen efforts to combat this savage crime.

Other major issues of global concern that the Assembly or its Committees covered dealt with a number of fields: children trapped in and brutalized by armed conflicts; gender equality; the proliferation of small arms and their negative impact; assistance to small island developing States; the International Criminal Court and its role in inter-State relations; the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, to be convened in 2001; and the high-level international forum on financing for development, which is also envisaged for 2001.

The reviewing and streamlining of the new scale of assessments is a difficult question, bearing as it does on the United Nations budget itself and resources available to the Organization to carry out its work globally. The resolutions and decisions of the Fifth Committee that the Assembly adopted give an indication that we are nowhere near achieving the ideal end to this longest-running agenda item. But we must continue the search.

Since the founding of the United Nations in 1945, the General Assembly has reached this stage of its work many times in the past, but none has been as propitious and pregnant with expectations as its fifty-fourth session at the century's and the millennium's end. The past is the mother of the future, with the present acting as midwife, but it is the future that matters most for human survival and progress.

No human generation has ever had the opportunity, the resources, the knowledge or the power at its disposal that ours has to meet the pressing human needs to save our children, to wipe out the killer diseases, to protect the environment and to empower the people with the productive skills to create and distribute wealth justly in society.

That obligation should also impel us, representing as we do all nations, cultures and civilizations and belonging to one human family, to bring together Governments, big

business, workers, non-governmental organizations, academia and the media, on the one hand; to wage an all-out war against HIV/AIDS, poverty and abuse of children; and, on the other, to strengthen the United Nations to become a truly democratic, effective, transparent and people-driven Organization.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness to all representatives for the encouragement and assistance they extended. They did so here in the Assembly, in the General Committee and in other major Committees, as well as during all types of informal consultations and in group or bilateral meetings.

Our illustrious Secretary-General and his Deputy have been generous with their time and advice. I thank them warmly. The Vice-Presidents were always readily available to assist and provide insight in our deliberations, including Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and His Serene Highness, Prince Albert of Monaco.

I had excellent interactions with the dedicated Chairpersons of the Main Committees, who contributed so much to our common achievements. Many sincere thanks to all of them.

Mr. Jin Yongjian and his able senior assistants and secretaries are exemplary United Nations civil servants and a hard-working team of professionals. My own office staff and security officers carried the heaviest burden by being always there within my shooting range and bore it all with remarkable excellence and a sense of humour. I am immensely grateful to them all.

There are many contingents of wonderful friends and supporters of the United Nations and its activities out there. How fortunate the United Nations community is to have such trusted and loyal members of our common extended family who care.

Before I conclude, may I say, partly on a lighter note and partly with sincere appreciation, that this plenary session was originally supposed to have recessed on 14 December. That recess was moved to 17 December, then 22 December, and now finally to 23 December. Delegations and Secretariat members serving on and responsible for the Fifth Committee, respectively, worked hard and long to finalize their work and to produce the recommendations, draft resolutions and decisions that the Assembly has just acted upon.

I wish to commend the Chairperson of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Wensley of Australia. I also want to commend the Coordinator of the Fifth Committee, the representative of Uganda, for his tireless efforts. Tough negotiations are the name of the game. Hopefully, whenever they are undertaken, it is in the spirit of fairness. As the saying goes, all is well that ends well.

In conclusion, I wish one and all a very happy holiday season and renewed vitality for the heavy schedule of activities that awaits us in 2000 and beyond. Tomorrow will be another day and when it comes, as it will, let it bring a new dawn and a triumphant take-off for the benefit of all the peoples of the world.

To those who must travel far, I wish them *bon voyage*. To those who must travel from this building to their homes, I wish them, too, *bon voyage*.

The meeting rose at 10.30 p.m.